

California Department of Education



Procedural Safeguards Referral Service

An informational guide on
resolving disputes involving
special education

Procedural Safeguards
Referral Service

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Special Education Division
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The Director of the Special Education Division, California Department of Education (CDE), has set the following goals for the division: *customer service, complaints management, and quality assurance*. The intent of Procedural Safeguards Referral Service (PSRS) is to help parents and schools communicate and efficiently resolve conflicts regarding special education for students with disabilities.

General Information

PSRS provides technical assistance for parents and others, informing them about options for dispute resolution, including but not limited to the compliance complaint process, mediation services, due process, and local alternative dispute resolution programs. PSRS also provides information on parents' rights under state and federal law. Special education resources are also available online or through the RiSE library.

Local Dispute Resolution

PSRS encourages the amicable resolution of disputes by promptly informing special education local plan areas (SELPA) and school districts of contacts made to PSRS. The intent, *with parent consent*, is to give local educational agencies and SELPA an opportunity to intervene early and resolve disputes at the district and county levels. Early intervention is designed to avoid the breakdown in communication that results in complaints, hearings, and litigation.

Complaints Intake

PSRS serves as an intake center for complaints alleging violations of state and federal law. The unit not only fields calls but also initiates responses to written complaints and expedites the investigation process, which is handled by the Complaint Management and Mediation (CMM) unit. PSRS communicates with CMM, McGeorge School of Law, and CDE Legal Department to monitor and support quality service and the timeliness of responses.

Data Support for Local Educational Agencies

PSRS will provide information to school districts and SELPA regarding the frequency and nature of calls PSRS receives in an effort to support local improvement planning. CDE's Special Education Division will also utilize the data to help identify technical assistance needs throughout the state.